Final Meeting Summary

Strategic Highway Corridors Summit

April 20, 2005
RBC Center
Raleigh, NC

This document is not intended to be a meeting transcript, *per se*. It is a summary of key themes and some (though not all) of the background dialogue. The meeting summary's structure roughly parallels that of the meeting agenda but is not necessarily true to the temporal order of discussion.

Attendees

Deborah Barbour
Chris Beacham
Pete Benjamin
Ted Bisterfield
Marvin Blount, III
Mike Bruff
Marella Buncick
Bob Collier
Lori Cove
Susan Coward
Marion Cowell, Jr.
David Cox
Jeffrey Crow
Craig Deal
Glenn Dennison
Nancy Dunn
Julie Hunkins
Charles Jones
Neil Lassiter
John Marshall
Scott McLendon
Leigh McNairy
Cam McRae
Tyler Meyer
Cris Mowrey
Jon Nance
Meredith Norris
Benton Payne
Ruffin Poole
Paul Rawls
Linda Rimer
Bill Ross
Len Sanderson
Ron Sechler
Roger Sheats
Roy Shelton
Nina Sloszberg
Dan Thomas
Steve Varnedoe
Don Voelker
David Wasserman
Martin Weiss

Handouts

- **Agenda**
- **Note Paper**
- **Strategic Highway Corridors concept Presentation (David Wasserman & Lori Cove)**
- **Rural Economic Development Presentation (Martin Weiss)**
- **Strategic Highway Corridors Implementation Items**
- **NCDOT Facility Type & Control of Access Definitions**
- **Strategic Highway Corridors Glossary**
- **Summit Evaluation**
- **Statewide Transportation Plan**
- **Tri-Agency Policy Statement**
- **Strategic Highway Corridors Maps (with Insets)**

Summary

Adam Saslow called the meeting to order at 9:07. Glenn Dennison and Julie Hunkins recorded the day's progress. Mr. Saslow generated this meeting summary with their notes.

Welcoming Remarks – One NC and Connectedness

Ruffin Poole – Governor's Office

Mr. Poole made three points:

- The Strategic Highway Corridors (SHC) concept is clearly an important step for the NCDOT and all the partner agencies;
- Ease of movement between communities is important to Governor Easley's One North Carolina agenda. The One North Carolina Agenda states that a goal is to

  Promote economic prosperity with an aggressive development strategy designed to bring high-skilled jobs, a high-tech infrastructure and a quality transportation system to every region of North Carolina.

- Governor Easley expects a spirit of cooperation among agencies.

Orientation to the Dialogue

Adam R. Saslow – President Consensus Solutions, Incorporated

The goals for the meeting were to:

- **Discuss the Strategic Highway Corridors (SHC) concept and developed a common set of understandings about the concept itself, its goals and what it means for the future of "One North Carolina;"**
- **Develop appreciation for the various partner agency processes and the challenges associated with integrating projects and systems;**
- **Discuss the attributes of partner agency processes and "institutions;"**
- Share information on the decision criteria that partners apply in evaluating highway projects;
- Identify an institutional structure for implementing the SHC concept, what partners need to be a part of it, and who from each agency needs to participate; and
- **Commit to a series of action items and next steps.**

In retrospect, all of the bolded items were achieved.

This was Mr. Saslow's first opportunity to facilitate a meeting for this group. The intent of the facilitator's role is to help further collaborative relationships and allow NCDOT to actively participate in the dialogue. Mr. Saslow indicated that he would adapt his style to the culture and needs of the group. Consensus Solutions, Incorporated would also memorialize this meeting in a meeting summary – promised to NCDOT within a few days. They would perform a quick review for any glaring errors and the "Draft Final" summary document would be circulated for comment soon thereafter (all likely by May 23rdth). Participants would be invited to submit comments. Mr. Saslow would edit accordingly and circulate a Final Meeting Summary before the June Board meeting.

Q1: Why is legislature not included today?
A1: This is the first step to get partner agencies on the same page. The time to pull the legislation is in later. We must first get ourselves on the same footing.

Strategic Highway Corridors Concept

Laura Cove, PE – NC Department of Transportation
David Wasserman, PE – NC Department of Transportation

NCDOT provided an overview of the SHC concept. Among the many highlights were:

- A presentation of the concept;
- Discussions of the processes used to identify the Strategic Highway Corridors;
- Plans for consistent decision-making and prioritization of efforts in implementing the concept.

The entirety of the presentation is available by contacting Mr. Wasserman at dswasserman@dot.state.nc.us.

Q2: Observations: No representation of local government today, which is important in land use planning. Why isn't local government represented at this Summit?
A2(a): We need to add this to a list of Action Items.
A2(b): Lots of land use planning at council of governments (COG's); have worked on corridor planning/access management.
A2(c): MPO's and RPO's involvement is here today and a good first step. They are gatekeepers /convenors of a sort for transportation related issues.
A2(d): Involving local government is oftentimes difficult when there are economic downturns.
A2(e): Use more locally oriented summits for corridor studies so as to educate and bring in others
A2(f): Strategies developed today can consider reaching local government and municipalities.

Q3: How does the Department of Commerce's (DOC) planning fit into SHC concept?
A3(a): DOC is still in planning phase regarding the economic development hubs. DOC and DOT will continue to coordinate. DOC's process is dynamic and long-term.
A3(b): SHC plan isn't set in stone; it will be re-updated and revised over time.

Q4: Is the SHC concept driven by land use planning in MPO and urban areas?

A4: To some extent. Land use drives access.

Q5: Is it safe to assume that local land use planning drove the development of the SHC concept?
A5: It was one among many elements.

Q6: In rural areas where no land use planning exists, did land use affect Strategic Highway Corridor planning?
A6(a): Corridors were selected by applying several criteria. Compatibility with land use plans across the state has yet to be verified.
A6(b): Land use considerations will be part of implementing the SHC concept so as to protect corridors.
A6(c): Evaluation of land use compatibility is still in need during implementation planning

Q7: Is this the next generation of "Intrastate System?" Is it consistent with intrastate corridors?
A7(a): No, the SHC concept was created to facilitate consistent decision-making. There is no true-line. NCDOT hopes that future project decisions are consistent with the vision of SHC.
A7(b): Improvements to SHC's may be a stepping stone to the ultimate vision. It is important that our partners do not make decisions that preclude the future vision of corridor.

Q8: How will endorsement of SHC concept affect individual project studies?
A8(a): Implementation issue to look at today.
A8(b): We don't have the answers, outcomes of corridor studies should be used as part of Purpose and Need

C1: Land use varies in certain parts of the state as does the level of land use controls (e.g., much of the rural landscape does not have zoning or subdivision constraints). This is why it is important to engage local officials in the process.

C2: Land use can affect corridors before road improvements are made. That would help to establish priorities and say we won't let things be built out that will negatively impact capacity/mobility along the facility. We need partners to help do this.

Economic Development Impacts of Rural Corridor Improvement

Martin Weiss – Team Leader, National Systems and Economic Development
Federal Highway Administration

Mr. Weiss indicated that "economic development is not random." Factors that lead to economic development include:

1. The removal of significant barriers (Laredo Texas example);
2. Location – proximity to more than one major city (as in Dublin, GA);
3. Connectivity to local production clusters (I-81 in VA and I-43 in WI);
4. Expansion in the employee/employer "shed" (as in Wisconsin);
5. Highway improvements between population centers and recreational outlets (as in Garrett County, MD);
6. Highway improvements and tax abatements (as in Hale County, TX and Rapides Parrish, LA);

7. Highway improvements and expansion of educational facilities (as in Madison County, TN);
8. Luck; and
9. Time

Mr. Weiss went on to mention that factors that do not seem to correlate include:

- Competing Nearby Parallel Corridor;
- Low Population Density; and
- Access Reduction on Freeway Facilities.

Mr. Weiss referenced a variety of analytical methods that can be used in predicting economic development including:

- Estimates from other studies (Roosevelt County, MT);
- Extrapolations from interviews (Imperial County, CA);
- Induced Regression to the mean (Lincoln Parish, Ruston Area, LA);
- Targeted Business will develop to serve defined customer base (Pine Ridge Reservation, SD);
- Business Density will reach specified level (I-99, PA);
- Business Density will reach same level as in peer corridor for specific industry group (US43/80, AL);
- Valuation of Connectivity, Access; and
- Hybrids of the Above.

Q9: What is definition of rural?
A9: No major metro or urban area.

Q10: Can you comment on the trend of ports supplying where businesses are not keeping parts inventories?
A10(a): Cannot extrapolate on this 'just-in-time" concept
A10(b): This would be good conversation for this afternoon. Warehouse of the 21st century is the highway system.

Q11: Can you comment on difficulty of promoting economic development in rural areas?
A11: There is no labor force nor are there markets. With the exception of cases where recreation was a significant factor, we have not found that improving highways substantially supports economic development in rural areas.

The Tri-Party Agreement and Why SHC is Critical to the Future of NC

Chris Beacham – Assistant Secretary, NC Department of Commerce
Nancy Dunn – Chairperson, Statewide Plan Committee, NC Board of Transportation
Bill Ross – Secretary, NC Department of Environment and Natural Resources

Nancy Dunn

The multi-modal plan represents dramatic change in how we are about to invest transportation money in the future:

- Historically met 65% of transportation needs- therefore, need to focus on maintenance, preservation and modernization. SHC plan fits into state long-range plan.
- Change in last 6 months in project decisions that are consistent with SHC concept.
- The SHC concept is critical to freight movement:
    - Domestic tonnage with increase by 7 %
    - International freight traffic to double
    - Container traffic to double
    - Trucks to carry 75% volume
    - 1990-2000, population increases by 21%
    - VMT increase by 40%
    - Transportation money stays the same
    - Interstate miles equal 1% of state system
    - Carry 20% of state's VMT
    - Need to remove interstate projects from equity formula
    - Safety concerns
    - 6th highest nationally in crashes (congestion and deteriorating facilities)
- Improvement Items/Decision to be made
    - Create vision for each corridor
    - Long-term decisions
    - Funding decisions
    - Project development decisions
    - Design decisions
    - Operation decisions
- Flat funding for transportation

Bill Ross

Partnership is a crucial element of transportation policy for North Carolina. We need to solve 21st century problems using 21st century processes and solutions:

- We need to look at ecosystems and the overall health of natural systems; and
- We need to create alliances

Today's impacts on the environment come from varied small sources of pollution (a lot of little things). The key to solving today's environmental problems is to encourage conservation on private lands (9 out of 10 acres is privately owned in North Carolina). The traditional regulatory system is inadequate for solving such problems (laws created adversaries instead of allies). We can make some headway by:

- Connecting conservation and development; and,
- Planning where we want to go

Innovation and partnerships must be the cornerstones. Individuals who can work together to make it happen. The Ecosystem Enhancement Program (EEP) is example of partnership at work.

Corridor planning should help facilitate the protection and conservation of the environment, , economic development, and historical/cultural presentation and take into account range and function of military base. We do need to consider the impacts of public policy on eastern North Carolina – including the military bases.

Chris Beacham

Historically, economic development efforts in the southeast resulted in the recruitment of low wage plants. This model, appropriate in the past, has outlived its usefulness. Today, the mandate of economic development has been broadened so as to help existing business, create an environment for new businesses to incubate and thrive and lever both technology and education. Other elements of today's economic development program involve:

- Quality of life;
- Fair supports;
- Clean environment;
- Infrastructure;
- Tax incentives; and
- Recreation and tourism

Today's Department of Commerce is trying to define development hubs (like activity centers). We would like to see a road system that brings people to jobs. We deal with tactical issues on a day-to-day basis. Transportation infrastructure and long range planning are critical elements of economic development. We need:

- Air-interconnectivity
- Port-interconnectivity

To facilitate communication and strive for these ends, DOC, DOT and DENR Secretaries meet quarterly.

Working Together: Challenges to and Opportunities for Collaborating in the Delivery of Strategic Highway Corridors

Don Voelker, FHWA – speaking on the Interagency Leadership Team and NEPA Processes
Craig Deal, NC Department of Environment and Natural Resources – speaking on NC DENR interests in the SHC Concepts and the many institutions in which they partner with NCDOT
John Marshall, Unifour Rural Planning Organization – speaking on how to involve local land use officials and how to get them engaged

Don Voelker

Interagency Leadership Team (ILT)

Based on identified need for increased communication and understanding of many agencies involved in delivering the transportation program in NC, NCDOT and FHWA instituted a gathering in July 2004 of high-level transportation and resource agencies integrally involved in planning, developing and implementing NC's transportation and environmental policies and programs.

Agency	Members
NC Dept. of Transportation	Len Sanderson, Roger Sheats
NC Dept. of Environment and Natural	Dempsey Benton, Craig Deal

Agency	Members
Resources	
NC Dept. of Commerce	Doug Byrd, Chris Beacham
NC Dept. of Cultural Resources	Jeff Crow, David Brook
NC Wildlife Resources Commission	Richard Hamilton
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers	Ken Jolly, David Franklin
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Pete Benjamin
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency	Heinz Mueller
NOAA Fisheries	Ron Sechler
Federal Highway Administration	John Sullivan, Don Voelker

Mission:

To develop an interagency leadership plan for North Carolina to successfully balancing mobility, natural and cultural resource protection, community values, and economic vitality at the confluence of our missions.

Benefits:

- Explain each other's missions and how each agency's activities are prioritized.
- Review our mission and find common ground. Find areas of overlap and look for opportunities to share activities, enhance collaboration, and create mutual benefits.
- Develop personal relationships with a benefit of improving communication and continued cooperation between agencies.
- Provide an organized platform for sharing information to allow us to move toward achieving the goals of our respective missions.

Goals

Top concerns and Issues identified in 2004 through a series of workshops:

1. Develop a shared GIS database. (Work already underway on NC ONE Map and legislature has been provided a joint signed letter asking for funding support for more assistance.)
2. Local Land Use and Long-Range Transportation Planning results in Projects that meet mobility and environmental goals. This is an area of supreme interest to resource agencies. We need to recognize that land use development and transportation planning need to go hand–in-hand. Presentation on Land Use will follow by John Marshall.
3. Improve the Merger '01 Process- Simply, Merger '01 is an updated NEPA/404 Merger agreement process which is an interdisciplinary approach by State and Federal resource agencies that do two things when it is completed – a signed environmental document is signed and a 404 Corps of Engineer's permit.
4. Ensure adequate capacity and effective use of staffing and resources. This is a goal we all agreed to but have not really spent a lot of time discussing. We anticipate our staffs will use their time more effectively as the ILT firms up its goals and next steps. But each of the ILT members realize we bear responsibility to look to our own staffs first.

The ILT meets essentially every two months and has facilitated meetings. It is still developing the specific objectives, opportunities, challenges, strategies, activities, outcomes and visions and performance measures for each of the four goals. We hope these will be completed by end of this summer, and consensus reached on the next steps.

NEPA

For NCDOT projects using Federal-aid highway funding, FHWA is the lead Federal agency responsible for implementing the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). FHWA does not initiate, select, plan, design, construct or maintain highway projects. It maintains a partnership with NCDOT that is valued. FHWA success depends on NCDOT success. FHWA uses technical assistance, training, and staff to improve NCDOT activities where FHWA can add value.

Yet NEPA is one area where FHWA has more authority than the above as it must sign NEPA related environmental documents.

NEPA Challenges:

Keep in mind the overarching theme of NEPA is **balanced decision-making**. Transportation decisions are made with full consideration of meeting mobility and environmental goals (emphasis).

- "Purpose and Need" statements need to solve a transportation problem.
- Projects must have logical termini- they must be usable when constructed and not preclude reasonable options for constructing adjacent sections of highway. For example, we can not end projects at a county line.
- Feasible and prudent alternative need to be analyzed.
- Potential environmental consequences of projects need to be clearly defined.
- We (owner agencies) need to document any analyses (traffic, air quality, noise, water, indirect and cumulative impacts, etc.)
- Local officials have a stake. The public has a stake.
- We must use an interdisciplinary approach in planning and decision-making.
- The selected alternative must incorporate measures to mitigate adverse impacts.

Craig Deal

Mr. Deal saw several opportunities in the SHC concept:

- Systems level analysis will include resource agencies and their interests
  - No longer limed to permitting but includes input on Purpose and Need, vision for a corridor
  - Design
  - Land use implications
  - Direct, cumulative and secondary impacts
- Partnering is important and we must do it strategically

Mr. Deal reflected on the many things he heard in the morning sessions including:

- The possibility of systems level analysis
- Stakeholder input earlier in the process paying great future dividends and assurance and predictability for a successful project

- An "up front" vision for each corridor (design, land use, direct and secondary impacts)
- Local and regional input on land use issues
- Integration of analysis on Indirect and Cumulative Impacts (ICI)
- Agency mission statements are melding – for the purpose of serving the people, needs and resources of North Carolina
- Agency stakeholder involvement can no longer be limited to the mechanics of NEPA and permitting arising out of project planning alone

Strategic Highway Corridors represent about 5,400 total miles. There are more than 180 current TIP project on those corridors

John Marshall

Mr. Marshall spoke about two corridor studies from his area, what they did and the different results:

Comparing and contrasting the two:

Interstate 40 in Burke County	US 321 in Caldwell County
Designated SHC Corridor Limited Access Multiple Jurisdictions Involved Both were joint projects between the MPO/RPO Seven local governments (Burke County and six municipalities- Hilderbran, Connelly Springs, Rutherford College, Valdese, Drexel, and Morganton)	Designated SHC Corridor Driveway Cuts Permitted Multiple Jurisdictions Involved Both were joint projects between the MPO/RPO Six local governments (Caldwell County and five municipalities -Hickory, Granite Falls, Sawmills, Hudson, and Lenoir)
Purpose: Evaluated the 15 Interchanges in the County: ▪ Rank interchange by deficiencies, two-way traffic on ramps, short ramps, etc. ▪ Frontage roads, proposed in between interchanges to help take traffic off I-40 ▪ Zoning and land use (made rezoning recommendation around interchanges) ▪ Infrastructure needs (recommended water and sewer line extensions) ▪ Aesthetics (recommended no new billboards) ▪ Economic development potential- Really got the local official interest, identified industrial sites, commercial sites, mixed use sites	**Purpose:** ▪ To develop and adopt uniform land use regulation ▪ Prohibit some uses ▪ Same setback requirements ▪ Same parking requirements (rear of building) ▪ Access management polices, interconnectivity, shared access ▪ Aesthetics requirements, limit number of billboards, large non-conforming signs, landscaping, buffering ▪ Right-of-way encroachments, car lots, manufactured home sales, sign in ROW

Both Studies had Positive Outcomes

- NCDOT support for access management and ROW encroachment areas or study
- EDC and Chamber support- they thought aesthetics were important
- Survey directed focus areas of study Access Management, Aesthetics, Right-of-Way Encroachment, Uniform Land Use Regulations

- US 321 specifically sought outside advice sought for landscaping, trees, and buffers
- Sign companies were invited to planning committee meetings
- Initially not a lot of complaints from the public as outreach efforts were made via mail and via surveys as well as large public meetings with maps and participation from entire committee

Because of the economic development implications, the I-40 study was well received and has the support from elected officials, MPO's, and RPO's

Perhaps the most important lesson learned was from the I-40 study. That process involved better and higher quality public participation and it made all the difference in acceptance of the plan. In that process, those responsible involved:

- Planners and Managers
- One County Commissioner
- Assistant Superintendent of public schools
- City Engineer
- EDC member
- NCDOT staff
- Two Property Owners
- One Town Council Member
- Two County Planning Board Members
- Several Business Owners

Problems with the US 321 Plan

There were several noted by Mr. Marshall:

- Three influential people may have significantly helped in delaying project. (Sign company owner, land landowner who will not sell the land, and former legislator with business interests along corridor)
- Bad economy in area and an unfounded rumor that new regulations will drive small business people out of business (regulations apply only to new developments)
- People that are subverting the process are "staking" the hearings with misinformed opposition

The opposition has delayed process by insisting on additional meetings until local officials feel this will be an election issue this fall (economy is the hot topic in the election). In retrospect, we should have had all these members on the same committee working together. Some business owners saw this as a conspiracy of the planning staff.

What would we do different?

Mr. Marshall said they would have:

- Tackled easy stuff in hindsight (access management, ROW encroachment, etc.) and not lumped those things together with aesthetic issues which are the most controversial.
- Included a more varied group to the study committee from the start
- Committee members should have participated in public meetings

Stress to local government officials

We have realized the importance of protecting the Strategic Highway Corridors because of the funding shifts from new construction to maintenance. We need to protect what we've got.

At this point the dialogue, Mr. Saslow turned to a series of questions and answers:

Q12: What about environmental considerations in the land use planning, have they been incorporated into corridor planning?
A12: Yes, those types of issues were addressed.

Q13: FHWA mentioned Indirect and Cumulative Impacts (ICI's). Where is FHWA on importance of this issue?
A13: It has been part of the law for a long time and treated lightly for years. More recently, due to court cases, FHWA is paying more attention to this. NC is now a leader nationally in this ICI analysis. We have more training and research, our (FHWA expectations will increase with what's included in NEPA process). The quality of our environmental documents should increase.

Q14: Strategic Highway Corridors are a compliment to the environmental process. By limiting access, do we help maintain or improve the environment? Does this complement or support the NEPA process?
A14: Yes. The ILT says land use and transportation are integral. Absolutely.

Q15: What about all the Federal land management agencies getting involved?
A15: Mr. Saslow asked that this be raised when we move toward the implementation discussion.

C3: Land management (National Forest Service, National Parks Service, etc) agencies that incorporate infrastructure into their planning efforts also need to be included in planning efforts.

Q16: What's next for the Interagency Leadership Team (ILT)??
A16(a): That is for the ILT to decide I cannot speak for them.
A16(b): It might be interesting to try yo plug the SHC concept into ILT activities.
A16(c): The challenge is in implementing the actions of ILT.

Q17: Is there a local institution to help take responsibility for SHC?
A17: MPO's and RPO's are working closely with DOT for corridor implementation.

C4: Speaking for the ILT, we are already working very intensively on the four management goals.

C5: Planning will be an ongoing project for a long time.

C6: The ILT has realized great synergy in collaborative planning.

Getting the Rubber to Meet the Road – Taking the SHC Concept from the Long Range Transportation Plan to Implementation

General Discussion

In broad strokes, NCDOT presented a few categories for implementing the concept with interagency collaboration. Discussion shone a light on the needs of participants for working

collaboratively to implement the Strategic Highway Corridors concept. The end product, the collection of tables below, presents a list of next steps and action items along with commitments to move forward. It is important to note that this part of the agenda was conducted as a brainstorming session with no prioritization of activities or any form of consensus agreement.

1. Education

All management and staff involved in transportation projects and decisions need to be educated on the Strategic Highway Corridors concept. Education needs to occur on a continuous basis to ensure that those involved are aware of the latest activities and policies:

Task Lead	What	By When	DOT Support
Leigh McNairy	Connectivity with Military Bases: This group needs to liaise with the NC Advisory Commission for Military Affairs We need to connect the roads between facilities. Philosophically we need to consider sustainability. The nexus with military bases is in thinking about how SHC can protect buffers (encroachment) Educate the educated. Pilot corridor improvement in sections and try new collaborative mechanisms for organizing studies. Design a process for choosing three sub-corridors etc….	ASAP	Obtain funding for accelerated building road connections
Tyler Meyer, John Marshall, David Wasserman	Develop a plan for educating RPO's and MPO's… (e.g., regular updates and status reports on the SHC Concept and getting input as processes for implementation unfold)	Will evolve throughout 2005	
DOT Board Members in concert with RPO's and MPO's	Develop regional presentations, forums or summits local elected officials as well as appointed officials (planning boards)		
Roger Sheats, Julie Hunkins, Nina S. in concert with DENR	Outreach to environmental and conservation communities via CONNET. Leverage the goodwill accrued from the Statewide Transportation Plan. Seek opportunities for e-mail distribution of materials via weblinks, blogs, etc…		
DOT initiative in concert with Commerce	Outreach to the development community – engage them through conferences and professional organizations with regard to the broad concept. This community must also be educated about things like non-attainment		
DOT	Division engineers and other board members must be spokespeople for SHC		

All organizations	Educate staff Develop a system for tracking receptivity and also dissent (may be used for developing incentives) Merger team presentations focused on Purpose and Need and what it means in this context.

2. Project-Level Decisions

Each member of merger teams and others involved in project level decisions should make decisions at the project-level that support the goals of the Strategic Highway Corridors concept, including **purpose and need** and **alternatives analysis decisions.**

Task Lead	What
Debbie Barbour, Greg Thorpe, DENR	Review all projects and develop a plan for transitioning projects in the pipeline… in a way that meets the needs of SHC and protects the integrity of the SHC. Meet with COE and DENR and other agencies We need to conduct a forum concerning purpose and need. What do we do when the purpose and need is not today but tomorrow… and the economics support action today Color code all projects in the TIP that are in the SHC. Create a culture where the SHC projects are the most prominent and highest priority projects for DOT and for the partner agencies. Involve the resource agencies in priority setting… certain corridors are more sensitive than others (US19) Pilot projects with the Department of Defense, the Ports etc… Use Onslow Bite and Onslow Bite Conservation Forum as a pilot case. Concerning military bases, we need to conduct a dialogue with commanding officers. They need to develop a realization that they have to look beyond the fence line… and we need to look in.

C7: If you try to adopt a new process halfway through project development, it is going to be incumbent on SOMEBODY to ensure what all that means. SHC is a great idea… but if that part of the plan is not ready, there may be some expectations that are not ultimately met. Potential for lots of confusion

3. Systems-Level Analysis and Studies

Corridor Studies will be an important mechanism for implementing the Strategic Highway Corridors concept at the systems-level. There are many different types of corridor studies; each of which is composed of different elements that best suit the need of the corridor. Multi-agency partners need to help define the different studies and elements, including how study outcomes feed into future

projects. Multi-agency partners also need to be involved in corridor studies from the beginning of the process. Two points were raised for further exploration:

1. Can these corridor studies be used to determine project level purpose & need
2. Can these corridor studies be used to exclude non-viable alternatives from consideration at the NEPA stage?

Task Lead	What
	We need to create a template for a corridor study. What does a corridor study need to look like? o Maximize use of GIS… and consistent tools… though data may be too "course." Vitally important to have the data sets… and more than a single parameter or overlay. o Integrate project/streamlining… formalize and institutionalize the linkage between project planning, environmental analysis and land use o It's about strengthening products and relationships. Looking at transportation on a regional and local level and feeding that into planning. Defining precisely what pieces need to go into the planning and development process. o GIS, NC One Map (A GIS System) o Early involvement in the DESIGN of the corridor study. Can we look for a systems level analog for the project level pipeline issue highlighted above? It may create efficiencies. Implement long term strategies which at least preserve options for implementing the SHC concept rather than land uses which PRECLUDE the implementation of SHC (within the bounds of the law). Involve local government in corridor study processes and identify measures needed to attain required results (access management, etc…). If we are successful it will help to fully incorporate the SHC concept in comprehensive planning/local land use planning process. We need to develop a methodology for incorporating ICI/SCE into the systems planning phase. It may create efficiencies later on. The Long Range Transportation Planning process should help facilitate this. Explore the use of Florida EDTM for use in analyzing corridors.

4. Land Use Decisions

Consistent and compatible land use decisions are needed to support the goals of the Strategic Highway Corridors concept. Mechanisms to assist this process include examining Indirect and Cumulative Impacts and developing state and local agreements. Multi-agency partners should help identify other mechanisms as well as encourage local agencies to make consistent and compatible land use decisions as possible.

Task Lead	What
	Expand the partnership base… to non-traditional partners including Natural Resources Conservation Service and even the Legislature. We need to use all available tools to impact land use decisions that preserve the options. Create efficiencies in the process of land acquisition so (a) we create equity for affected people and (b) we reduce the distortions in the land use and ownership/development marketplace. Elevate land use planning along these corridors to the state level where insufficient land use controls are in place?[1] Prioritize corridors that are willing to move forward.

5. Corridor Protection

Protecting the Strategic Highway Corridors from development is needed to achieve the long-term vision for each facility. A corridor protection program needs to be developed by multi-agency partners, which identifies the different tools, techniques, and strategies for protecting the Corridors.

Task Lead	What
	Determine any and all limitations on Advanced Right of Way Restrictions? This is a BIG challenge… chicken and egg. Opportunity for change legally? We need a completed and final NEPA document (Note: After the Summit, Mr. Voelker noted that section 2.1.8 of the ROD it states that the ROD approval at Tier One stage allows the use of Federal funds for property acquisition meeting conditions of hardship, protective acquisition, or for mitigation purposes. In addition, the specific section of the regulations which discuss early right-of-way acquisition is 23 CFR 710.501. FHWA has used these procedures in NC on a limited basis in the past and would be willing to use them as necessary in the future. He noted that if early right-of-way acquisition is a major issue, FHWA may have ways to do things earlier in the process than it normally allows. Push NEPA back into systems planning? Are we doing it without calling it NEPA? Is that efficient? Learn from the military's encroachment experience. Can we be designated an FHWA pilot state? Tiered EIS (as in high speed rail corridor) is being used right here! This allows agencies to look at a route and come to some kind of agreement on what that corridor or route will look like… and as projects are developed, they look at details and access management. (Note: Please see information presented in the Appendix) Write a purpose and need that is far narrower… leading to fewer alternatives.

[1] During the comment period for this summary, it was suggested that a task here be to "develop a plan for local government engagement, both in defining corridor vision in the urban context as something that the locals can live with and agree to, and in delineating needed local implementation steps for effective corridor participation."

Q18: Is there a possibility of getting advanced right-of-way?
A18(a): Before advance right-of-way acquisition can begin, DOT needs a final NEPA document and know how much right-of-way to acquire. We would need State money for advance right-of–way acquisition. It is important that the NEPA process be used as it was intended – as a process for making decisions and not as a process to justify decisions after the fact.
A18(b): We should look at changes in law as to how/who protects corridors.

C8: If information is available prior to NEPA, it would be good for agencies to be able to commit more then they currently do even if it is prior to NEPA

Q19: Could FHWA designate DOT as a pilot for streamlining process flow permission to do corridor study to test?
A19: NC should consider tiered EIS approach as is currently used by DOT's rail division.

C9: If more work is done up front and purpose and need is well defined, the range of alternatives is narrowed to include:

1. Feedback on Plan
2. Thought to future role
3. Who else to be involved in implementation

Next Steps

In terms of next steps, Ms Dunn believes that creating an SHC Concept Steering Committee is the next and most logical step. That Steering Committee will create a more detailed roadmap for advancing the concept in concert with all of the fine ideas related above.

The NC Board of Transportation will be apprised of progress made here today in the June Board meeting and oversee the progress of the Steering Committee in the months ahead.

Parking Lot

With limited time constraints, the group did not have the opportunity to complete a "SWOT" (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) Analysis (a la Michael Porter's Strategic Planning Theory).

CROSS AGENCY INSTITUTIONS

A DISCUSSION FROM THE STRATEGIC HIGHWAY CORRIDORS SUMMIT

Strengths	Weaknesses

Opportunities	Threats

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at approximately 4:15PM.

Appendix: Tier I: Record of Decision (Evansville to Indianapolis, IN)

After the Summit, Mr. Voelker noted that section 2.1.8 of the ROD it states that the ROD approval at Tier One stage allows the use of Federal funds for property acquisition meeting conditions of hardship, protective acquisition, or for mitigation purposes. In addition, the specific section of the regulations which discuss early right-of-way acquisition is 23 CFR 710.501. FHWA has used these procedures in NC on a limited basis in the past and would be willing to use them as necessary in the future. He noted that if early right-of-way acquisition is a major issue, FHWA may have ways to do things earlier in the process than it normally allows.

Mr. Voelker later noted that his best example of a tiered EIS is I-69. The information at http://deis.i69indyevn.org/ROD/index.html provides information on how that tiered EIS was completed. For easy reference key information is presented here as an appendix to this summary – the Table 2 from the report and which provides the methodology for Tier 1 and Tier 2 activities.

Table 1 Overall Methodology for Tier 1 and Tier 2		
	Tier 1 Activities	**Tier 2 Activities**
Public Outreach	Obtain input across wide geographic area (26 counties). Address entire Indianapolis-to-Evansville corridor.	Focus on those impacted in and near single corridor. Separate outreach activities for each section. Use Community Advisory Committee(s) in each section. Closer coordination with MPOs and local units of government.
Resource Agency Coordination	Coordination at key decision points. Based upon GIS-level impacts, some of which are field-verified.	Continue coordination. Use more detailed impact data based upon specific alignment (footprint). Data will be field-verified.
Purpose and Need	Consider national, state, and regional needs. Based on comprehensive needs analysis of 26-county Study Area.	Refine needs and project goals identified in Tier 1, as appropriate. Focus on local needs specific to individual sections.
Alternatives Development	Consider broad range of corridors over large geographic area.	Generally will consist of a single alignment together with route variations or design options in specific areas within the selected corridor.
Cost Development	Costs given in 2000 dollars. Costs based upon typical sections and terrain types.	Costs given in current dollars. Costs based upon specific design of highway, frontage roads, bridges, interchanges, and mitigation.
Mitigation	Agency coordination for mitigation commenced after Preferred Alternative was recommended by INDOT. Impacts based upon GIS analysis. In some cases, impacts are field-verified.	Agency coordination for mitigation ongoing from commencement of study. Mitigation based on more detailed impact information. Impacts are field-verified.
NEPA Decision	Select Corridor (approximately 2000 feet wide).	Select actual location of I-69 including interchange locations, grade separations, and other design and mitigation features.

Table 2 Environmental Analysis for Tier 1 and Tier 2		
Environmental Resource	**Tier 1 Activities**	**Tier 2 Activities**
Wetlands	Identify wetlands using National Wetlands Inventory maps.	Delineate wetlands through field survey following Corps procedures.
Historic/Archaeology	Conduct research using Interim Reports with limited survey and Records check with GIS analysis, and site visits.	Make final determinations of eligibility and boundaries through additional field work and research. Resolve any adverse effects.
Threatened & Endangered Species	Identify species in Study Area for all alternatives; prepare Biological Assessment (BA) and obtain Biological Opinion (BO) for Preferred Alternative.	Conduct additional field studies pursuant to Tier 1 BO. If applicable, prepare additional BAs and obtain BOs for Tier 2 sections.
Farmland	Identify farmland, including prime farmland.	Map and delineate farmland, including prime farmland; complete NRCS forms.
Land Use	Use GIS layers to identify land uses. Field verify land use shown on aerials. Review local land use plans for consistency.	Use GIS layers to identify land uses. Field verify land use shown on aerials. Review local land use plans for consistency. Consult with local officials responsible for land use planning.
Water Quality and Floodplains	Use GIS layers to identify water bodies, floodplains, and water quality.	Conduct field surveys to evaluate biodiversity and water quality, as appropriate.
Air Quality	Conduct comparative analysis of alternative air quality impacts; demonstrate conformity with applicable air quality plans.	Conduct microscale ("hot spot") analysis; update conformity analysis and/or findings, if needed.

Table 2 Environmental Analysis for Tier 1 and Tier 2 (continued)		
Environmental Resource	**Tier 1 Activities**	**Tier 2 Activities**
Economic Impacts	Identify impacts within regions using REMI model.	Assess impacts on local basis and consult with local officials.
Social Impacts	Use aerials and field survey to estimate relocations; identify other social impacts.	Conduct community impact assessments; refine relocation impacts.
Cumulative Impacts	Determine existing land use trends and forecast future trends for key resources; identify other major projects.	Consult with local officials and determine localized development trends.
Noise	Estimate noise impact contour lines; identify potential noise mitigation areas.	Use noise model to identify noise-impacted receivers; identify likely noise barrier locations.
Visual	Evaluate view of and from the roadway; identify key scenic areas.	Refine assessment of visual impacts by field surveys; develop context-sensitive designs.
Karst	Identify areas with high density of sensitive karst features, using best available mapping.	Conduct field surveys to locate karst features; conduct dye tracings and other actions required under INDOT Karst MOA.
Construction	Describe potential construction impacts.	Analyze site-specific impacts

2.0 DECISION

The Selected Alternative is Alternative 3C, as illustrated in Figure 1. The alternative is divided into six Tier 2 sections, as illustrated in Figure 1. A Tier 2 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will be prepared for each Tier 2 section. This Record of Decision is based on the FEIS and in the event of any differences in wording, the Record of Decision takes precedence over the FEIS.

2.1 BUILD DECISION AND CORRIDOR SELECTION

This Record of Decision approves the selection of the alternative that was identified in the FEIS as "Preferred Alternative 3C." This alternative is a corridor, generally 2000 feet in width, within which specific alignments will be developed in Tier 2 studies. The rationale for selection of Alternative 3C is summarized below in Section 3.5 of this Record of Decision.

2.1.1 Selection of Build Alternative. This Record of Decision approves the selection of a "Build" alternative for an Interstate highway, I-69, between Evansville and Indianapolis.

2.1.2 Location of Corridor. The location of the selected Alternative 3C corridor is depicted in the FEIS, Vol. III, *Environmental Atlas.* The selected Alternative 3C corridor connects the following points in Indiana: Evansville, Oakland City, Washington, Crane Naval Surface Warfare Center, Bloomington, Martinsville, and Indianapolis. The southern terminus is at the I-164/I-64 interchange just north of Evansville. The northern terminus is west of the I-465/SR 37 interchange in Indianapolis.